4.3.4.1.8 *Socioeconomics*

This section analyzes the socioeconomic effects of the vitrification facility for each of the candidate sites. Only the sites with the greatest socioeconomic effects are discussed. Socioeconomic impacts attributable to construction would be reduced if existing facilities are used for part of the vitrification operation. The effects at all of the candidate sites are found in the supplemental socioeconomic Data Report (Socio 1996a).

Regional Economy Characteristics. Constructing a vitrification facility at any of the sites analyzed would generate employment and income increases within the affected REA. Constructing the facility would require 382 workers in the peak year of construction at any site. The largest increases in regional employment (less than 1 percent) and regional per capita income (much less than 1 percent) among the sites analyzed would be at INEL. A total of 776 new jobs (382 direct and 394 indirect) would be generated and regional unemployment would fall from 5.4 percent to 4.9 percent (Socio 1996a).

Operating the facility would generate greater socioeconomic changes than would construction, due to the larger, more permanent workforce. A workforce of 768 would be required for full operation at any site. Implementing the alternative at INEL would generate the largest increases in regional employment (almost 2 percent) and per capita income (less than 1 percent). A total of 2,828 new jobs (768 direct and 2,060 indirect) would be generated by the operational activities and regional unemployment would fall to 4.0 percent (Socio 1996a).

Population and Housing. At all of the sites analyzed, construction employment requirements would be met by the available resident labor force, but some in-migrating workers would be needed to fill specialized positions during operation. Project-related increases in population would be greatest if the facility is located at Pantex. However, this increase would be less than 1 percent over No Action population projections. Housing units, in excess of existing vacancies, may be required at all of the sites analyzed, except NTS and ORR, to accommodate the in-migrating population during operation. The greatest increase in housing requirements would be in the INEL ROI but this would be much less than 1 percent over No Action estimates. Historic housing construction rates indicate that there would be sufficient housing units available to accommodate the population growth at all of the sites analyzed (Socio 1996a).

Community Services. During construction, there would be no increased demand for community services at any of the sites analyzed. However, operation of the facility would slightly increase the demand for community services at all sites analyzed. The effects of population growth due to in-migrating workers during construction or operations would be minor. The following discussion focuses on the Pantex ROI which is expected to experience the largest increase in demand for community services.

To maintain the No Action student-to-teacher ratio of 16.3:1 in the Pantex ROI, 15 new teachers would be needed during operation of the proposed facility. However, the increase in teacher requirements would be distributed over several school districts in the ROI, and no single school district would be significantly affected (Socio 1996a).

Only three additional police officers and three firefighters would need to be added in the Pantex ROI to maintain No Action service levels of 2.3 police officers and 2.3 firefighters per 1,000 persons (Socio 1996a).

Projected hospital occupancy rates would increase slightly over No Action estimates. However, projected hospital capacities would be capable of accommodating the small increase in patient load. To maintain the No Action service level of 2.0 physicians per 1,000 persons, only 2 additional physicians would be needed in the Pantex ROI (Socio 1996a).

Local Transportation. Traffic generated during the construction of the vitrification facility would not affect the level of service on the local road segments analyzed at any of the sites. However traffic would have the greatest

effect on local transportation at INEL. U.S. 20/26 from U.S. 26 East to Idaho State Route 22/33 would experience a drop in level of service from B to C (Socio 1996a).